

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A taking lens unit comprising:

a lens barrel;

plural lens elements contained in said lens barrel; and

a flare stopper disposed between said lens elements so that light that passes through at least one of the plural lens elements falls on the flare stopper, an inner periphery of the flare stopper defining a circular opening to pass incident light upon said taking lens unit, said flare stopper comprising a sheet material having an overall shape defined by first and second sections;

wherein the first section of the sheet material has a shape of a planar ring, and the second section of the sheet material has a shape of a side face of a circular truncated cone, with an outermost portion of the second section meeting an innermost portion of the first section, and

wherein an innermost portion of the second section defines said circular inner periphery.

7. (original) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, further comprising:

a spacer disposed between said lens elements, wherein said flare stopper in said taking lens unit is attached to said spacer.

8. (previously presented) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, wherein said sheet material is phosphor bronze plate and the overall shape of the flare stopper is produced by sheet metal stamping.

9. (original) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 8, wherein the thickness of said phosphor bronze plate is approximately 0.03 mm.

10. (previously presented) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, wherein said sheet material is Mylar (trade name) film and the overall shape of the flare stopper is produced by sheet metal stamping.

11. (previously presented) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 10, wherein the thickness of said Mylar film is approximately 0.03 to 0.05 mm.

12. (previously presented) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 10, wherein the flare stopper and one of the lens elements are arranged so that one of said lens elements presses and deforms said flare stopper so that said inner periphery is inclined with respect to said optical axis of said taking lens unit.

13. (previously presented) A taking lens unit as recited in claim 6, wherein said flare stopper is nipped and held between a first of said lens elements and a spacer, the spacer being arranged between the first lens element and another of the lens elements.

14-20. (canceled)

21. (previously presented) The taking lens of claim 6, wherein the second section of the sheet material is not in contact with any of the plural lens elements.

22. (previously presented) The taking lens of claim 7, wherein the flare stopper makes contact with only the spacer.

23. (canceled)

24. (previously presented) The taking lens of claim 6, wherein the sheet material is one of a plate and a film.

25. (currently amended) A taking lens unit comprising:
a lens barrel;
plural lens elements contained in said lens barrel; and
a flare stopper disposed between said lens elements, an inner periphery of the flare stopper defining a circular opening to pass incident light upon said taking lens unit

wherein said circular inner periphery is defined by a portion of the flare stopper that is inclined with respect to an optical axis of said taking lens unit; and

wherein the flare stopper and one of the lens elements are arranged so that one of said lens elements presses and deforms

said flare stopper so that said inner periphery is inclined with respect to said optical axis of said taking lens unit, the flare stopper and the deforming lens element being arranged with respect to one another such that an inner portion of the flare stopper is in contact with the deforming lens element, with a space being present between an outer portion of the flare stopper and the deforming lens.